

Broadmoor Church, Madison, addresses allegations of past sexual abuse

By Tony Martin

Editor

According to a statement shared by the Church Council of Broadmoor Church, Madison, the church made a public statement entitled "Addressing Our Present and Future," disclosing allegations of past sexual abuse by a former youth pastor. This was the follow-up statement to another document, "Addressing Our Past," shared with the church earlier.

The statement released by the Church Council July 14 reads, in part, "We attempted to share transparently and provided a plan to engage a third-party firm to assess the allegations, as well as provide a thorough examination of our historical policies and practices, pastoral responses over relevant time frames, and our current culture, policies, and practices. The goal of this independent process was to help us fully understand what had taken place and, subsequently, to understand how this happened, what steps we can take to create a safer place for those impacted, and ensure we are doing all in our power to protect the vulnerable and prevent abuse. Throughout this process, we committed to providing counsel to those in our family of faith."

The church contracted Guidepost Solutions, an independent, third-party firm, to independently investigate and provide updates as needed to the Church Council.

The recent response document from the Church Council includes statements mentioning "failures that are revealed in this report, and we grieve them deeply."

Secondly, the statement calls for lament: “We invite you to lament with your brothers and sisters at Broadmoor and in the larger body of Christ ... In all our pain, we acknowledge [its] destruction and collectively surrender it to the Lord Jesus. We are sad for the brokenness we see and continually walk in, but we rejoice in our Sovereign Lord, who holds us fast.”

Third, the Church Council identified several ways to improve the church’s policies and culture. Steps to be taken include a review of guidelines and policies; hosting ongoing training and forums to learn from survivors and trained education and professionals so they can better prevent abuse and respond helpfully when abuse has occurred; expanding the capacity of their counseling ministry; and forming a Caring Well Team composed of professional counselors, educators, law enforcement, and ministers to oversee the continual review, training, and engagement of anyone impacted by abuse.

The statement finally offers words to the survivor in the situation; others affected by sexual abuse; and to the congregation, community, and media. The church does not intend to make any additional comment beyond this response, although they have invited any questions to be directed to questions@broadmoor.org.

You may read the church’s full response at <https://www.broadmoor.org/addressingourpresent-future/> .